

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS: EWWT, YE, IBRD, UNDP

SUBJECT: PORT STUDY TO FAVOR RETENTION OF HODEIDA ON YAR'S
PREMIER PORT

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: UN/IBRD-SPONSORED TEAM SURVEYING YEMEN'S
PORT RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL HAS CONCLUDED THAT ONLY ECONOMICALLY
FEASIBLE PORT SITE AVAILABLE AT PRESENT INVOLVES FURTHER EXPANSION
AND DEVELOPMENT OF HODEIDA'S FACILITIES. TEAM'S FINAL REPORT
WILL BE SUBMITTED TO BANK AND UN NEXT MONTH.

2. ALTHOUGH TEAM INITIALLY THOUGHT LARGE NATURAL HARBOR AT SALIF
WOULD BE LEADING PORT CONTENTER, TEAM'S LEADER NOTED AHT
SALIF COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED IN VIEW OF CURRENT ISOLATION FROM
MAIN ROADS AND POPULATION CENTERS AND HIGH CONSTRUCTION COSTS.
HE ESTIMATED HODEIDA'S COMPARABLE COSTS WOULD BE ONE-THIRD
THOSE FOR SIMILAR FACILITIES AT SALIF. NON-AVAILABILITY OF RESIDENT
LABOR SUPPLY AT SALIF AND "3BILLION" RIALS (YRLS 4.5 EQUALS US\$1.00)
INFRASTRUCTURE ALREADY AT HODEIDA ALSO FACTORS IN TEAM'S DECISION.
MOKHA ALSO SURRENDS IN TEAM'S VIEW WHICH CONCLUDED THAT FURTHER
EXPANSION NOT PRACTICAL EVEN AS OUTLET FOR TRADITIONAL TAIZ
TRADE. TEAM SUGGESTS, INSTEAD, THAT ALL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS FOCUS
ON HODEIDA.

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3. TEAM'S LEADER SEES MAJOR DRAWBACK AT HODEIDA ONE OF INADEQUATE INITIAL PLANNING. WITH PROPER REALIGNMENT OF BREAKWATERS AND EXTERIOR LAND WALL, PORT AREA COULD BE EXPANDED SUFFICIENTLY TO BERTH OVER TWENTY VESSELS (VERSUS THREE PRESENTLY) WITH UNLIMITED STORAGE SPACE. PROBLEM OF HARBOR'S CURRENT 23 FOOT DRAUGHT LIMITATION COULD BE OVERCOME BY DREDGING, WITH 30 FOOT DEPTH VIEWED AS POSSIBLE.

4. TEMA'S FINDINGS WILL BE POPULAR WITH MOST HODEIDA CIVIC AND BUSINESS LEADERS WHO FEARED TOWN MIGHT GO THE WAY OF MOKHA IF SALIF DEVELOPED. BUT DECISION LIKELY TO CAUSE SOME CONSTERNATION AMONG THOSE YARG OFFICIALS HOPING TO SEE REAL ALTERNATIVE TO ADEN DEVELOPED AT IHCGWIFOM NOT KNOWN AT THIS DATE HOW FINDINGS WILL AFFECT SOVIET PLANS FOR HARBOR'S EXPANSION WHICH ARE ON MUCH SMALLER AND LESS AMBITIOUS SCALE. SIMILARLY, IF CONCLUSIONS ACCEPTED BY YARG. HODEIDA WILL AGAIN BE FAVORED SITE FOR EVENTUAL REFINERY. AT PRESENT SALIF PRIME CONTENDER, ALTHOUGH YARG RECENTLY HAS BEEN CONSIDERING INLAND TIHAMA TOWN OF ZAYDIA IN RESPONSE TO SALT CORROSION AND LABOR SUPPLY PROBLEMS AT SALIF.

5. COMMENT. TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS REGARDING HODEIDA SURPRISING AND BOUND TO CAUSE CONSIDERABLE INTEREST HERE. UNLIKELY SALIF HAS HAD LAST TURN AT BAT IN VIEW OF FORTHCOMING ROADS WHICH WILL LINK PORT TO HODEIDA AND ZAYDIA (BOTH ON PROPOSED SAUQODI-FINA D TRANS-TIHAMA HIGHWAY). SALIF, ALTHOUGH LOSING GROUND AS ACTUAL REFINERY SITE, STILL FAVORED AS CRUDE OIL DISCHARGING POINT, AND WILL HAVE SOME COMMERCIAL TRADE IF SALT TRADE RESUSCITATES. QUESTIONABLE WHETHER COST CONSIDERATIONS WILL TAKE ON SAME DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE IF ARAB RATHER THAN WORLD BANK FUNDING OBTAINED FOR EVENTUAL PORT PROJECT.
RANSOM

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